

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 08422 261241Z

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INFO USDEL ALEXANDRIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 8422

FROM PECK

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (OBEY, DAVE D-WISC)

SUBJECT: CODEL OBEY VISIT TO EGYPT

REF: CAIRO 8402

1. CODEL CONSISTING OF HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS OBEY, KOCH AND EARLY ACCOMPANIED BY NEA/RA DEP DIR CHEEK, DEPARTED CAIRO 1600 AUG 25 AFTER HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL 3-DAY VISIT HIGHLIGHT OF VISIT FOR CONGRESSMEN WAS HOUR LONG MEETING WITH PRES SADAT REPORTED SEPARATELY (REFTEL).
2. FIRST DAY SPENT ON TRIP TO SUEZ AND ISMAILIA HOSTED BY SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY AND MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION. CODEL WAS IMPRESSED WITH AMOUNT OF RECONSTRUCTION ACCOMPLISHED AT SUEZ IN LESS THAN ONE YEAR AND WITH RURAL HOUSING PROJEXTS BETWEEN SUEZ AND ISMAILIA. CHAIRMAN OF SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY MASHHOUR HOSTED LUNCHEON AT ISMAILIA WHICH INCLUDED KEY SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITIES, GOVERNOR, LOCAL REPS OF MINISTRIES OF RECONSTRUCTION AND FINANCE, AND HEAD OF ARAB SOCIALIST UNION. CODEL ALSO TOOK 1/2 HOUR BOAT RIDE AT SUEZ ENTRANCE TO CANAL. IN EVENING CODEL CALLED ON MANSOUR HASSAN, MEMBER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY FOR DETAILED BRIEFING ON WORKING OF ASSEMBLY. HASSAN
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 08422 261241Z

A HIGHLY ARTICULATE UNIV OF MICHIGAN GRADUATE, MADE EXCELLENT

IMPRESSION WITH HIS BALANCED PRESENTATION OF CURRENT ROLE OF ASSEMBLY AND PRES SADAT'S STRATEGY FOR TRANSITION TO MULTI PARTY SYSTEM. IN ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR AND DCM, WHO IN ALEXANDRIA FOR SECRETARY'S VISIT, ECON COUNSELOR PECK HOSTED WORKING DINNER WHICH INCLUDED HIGH-LEVEL REPS FROM MFA, MIN ECON COOP, MIN OF FINANCE AND PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY. CONGRESSMEN WERE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES THEY WERE ABLE TO HAVE WITH EGYPTIANS AND BY INCLUSION OF KNIGHT NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT JAMES MCCARTNEY.

3. MOST OF AUG 24 SPENT DRIVING TO AND FROM ALEXANDRIA FOR MEETING WITH SADAT. CODEL ALSO MET FOR 1-1/2 HOURS WITH DEPUTY PM AND FONMIN FAHMY. COMING AFTER SADAT MEETING DISCUSSION WITH FAHMY WAS AN ANTI-CLIMAX. UNLIKE SADAT, FAHMY WAS IN SOMEWHAT ARTUMENTATIVE MOOD AND AVOIDED DIRECT REPLIES TO SEVERAL CODEL QUESTIONS. IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSMAN EARLY'S QUESTION ABOUT US AID TO ISRAEL AND PARTICULARLY GUARANTEEING SUPPLY OF OIL, FAHMY SAID EGYPT WOULD APPRECIATE WHAT US DOES TO OBTAIN SIGNING OF CURRENT ACCORD, BUT HE BELIEVED US WAS PAYING FOR POLICIES OF PAST 25 YEARS OF GIVING ISRAEL WHATEVER IT DEMANDED. FAHMY WENT ON TO SAY EGYPT HAS REACHED POINT WHERE IT ISN'T SURE WHERE TO TURN; SHOULD IT DEAL WITH ADMINISTRATION, GO BEHIND THE BACK OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEAL DIRECTLY WITH CONGRESS, OR CREATE AN ARAB LOBBY LIKE THE ZIONISTS? OBEY RESPONDED THAT CONGRESS WILL HAVE LEGITIMATE CONCERS WITH PARTS OF AGREEMENT AND THAT IT IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS NOT PRO-ISRAELI PER SE AND THERE ARE MANY INDEPENDENTS ON THIS ISSUE. FAHMY STRESSED THAT WE ARE AT TURNING POINT AND IF THINGS DEVELOP AS EGYPT WANTS THERE WILL BE IMPORTANT CHANGES IN GEOPOLITICS OF AREA IN FAVOR OF US INTERESTS. FAHMY SAID ISRAELIS WERE TESTING US SYSTEM BY REJECTING AGREEMENT IN MARCH AND ATTEMPTING TO TOPPLE PRESIDENT FORD AND KISSINGER. AS LONG AS ISRAELIS READ US SYSTEM AS FAVORABLE THEY WILL DO NOTHING. FAHMY ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT USSR IS FURIOUS AND APPLYING VARIETY OF PRESSURES ON EGYPT INCLUDING ENCOURAGEMENT OF RADICAL ARAB ATTACKS, WITHHOLDING MILITARY SUPPLIES, DEMANDING 250 MILLION DOLLARS ANNUAL DEBT REPAYMENT AND WITHHOLDING SPARE PARTS AND RAW MATERIALS FOR HELWAN IRON AND STEEL COMPLEX WHICH THREATENS EMPLOYMENT OF 25,000 WORKERS. EITHER EGYPT

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 08422 261241Z

HAS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO USSR OR FIND SUPPORT ELSEWHERE. DURING THIS "HIGHLY CRITICAL PERIOD OF TRANSITION" FAHMY SAID EGYPT IS NOW WIDE OPEN TO WESTERN INVESTMENT AND PRAISED AMERICAN-SUPPORTED SILO PROJECT AS TYPE OF INVESTMENT NEEDED. HE SAID EGYPT DID NOT WANT TO UTILIZE EASTERN EUROPEAN CREDITS AND HAS NOT YET DRAWN DOWN ANY OF \$100 MILLION CREDIT FROM ROMANIA.

4. FAHMY PARRIED QUESTIONS ON FACE-TO-FACE NEGOTIATIONS AND SIGNING OF TREATY RECOGNIZING STATE OF ISRAEL BY ASKING WHY ISRAEL NOT WILLING TO DECLARE IT WILL WITHDRAW TO 1967 BORDERS REFUSED TO SIGN NPT AND DOES NOT ALLOW US OFFICIALS TO VISIT DIMONA REACTOR. NEVERTHELES, MEETING ENDED ON FRIENDLY NOTE OF MUTUAL DESIRE FOR PEACE.

5. REMAINDER OF VISIT INCLUDED VISIT TO PYRAMIDS, TOUR OF EGYPTIAN MUSEUM GUIDED BY CURATOR DR. SALAH RAMADAN, AND SHOPPING TOUR OF BAZAARS FOLLOWED BY LUNCHEON AT ORIENTAL RESTAURANT. CODEL VERY PLEASED WITH FRONT-PAGE PICTURES OF MEETING WITH SADAT IN ALL PAPERS AUG 25.

6. COMMENT: MEETING WITH SADAT WAS CODEL'S NO. 1 PRIORITY AND THIS WENT OFF VERY WELL. CODEL'S IMPRESSIONS DID NOT APPEAR ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY FAHMY'S PERFORMANCE AND THEY ACCEPTED AMBASSADOR'S EXPLANATION THAT FAHMY WAS TIRED AND IN EXASPERATED MOOD. KOCH WAS PARTICULARLY APPRECIATIVE OF AMBASSADOR'S INTERVENTIONS TO OBTAIN MORE RESPONSIVE ANSWERS FROM FAHMY.
EILTS

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